

From: Stephen Besedick
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/27/01 6:55pm
Subject: Antitrust Case

Dear Sirs,

Microsoft has been determined guilty of violating anti-trust laws but has not been "punished" accordingly! No reasonable person would ask that the federal government impose "corrections" that cripple Microsoft, but it must find ways of leveling the playing field. With the enroachment of technology into almost every facet of our daily lives, it is imperative that no ONE company be in control. It has become quite obvious over the years that an overwhelming majority of American consumers do NOT really care what computer operating system they use

. . .they just want it to WORK. Furthermore, given the inherent communicative nature of computer technologies, the American consumer wants to be able to "talk" and/or "share" information with others; and have this whole process WORK transparently behind the scenes no matter what make or model of computing device a person uses. This model of compatability is just the thing that makes the internet such a succesful vehicle for communication. When standards are invoked, all manufacturers must meet the criteria or face exclusion from the market. It's sort of like UL approved appliances . . . where standards of safety are set, and all manufacturers build accordingly. If, on the other hand, we let a manufacturer establish the standard(s), the consumer is subjected to the levels of safety this manufacturer deems appropriate. It is quite clear that this latter model most closely remsembles the state of technology in our country. In this writer's opinion, Microsoft has been allowed to climb its way (on the backs of unwary consumers) to the position where it alone defines the viability of technology solutions. It answers to no one, and crushes any who may oppose it. It's not that Microsoft is inherently bad, but that it needs to be put in its place. The federal government is at a crossroads wherein it can help shape the technological future of our country. If it allows Microsoft to continue in its ways, everyone will be tied to its whims and fancy. On the other hand, if it forces Microsoft to become simply a tech company (not the standard), it will truly level the playing field for all who choose to compete. The success or failure of a company will again rest on its ability to meet consumer needs.

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